

Frequently Asked Questions

302 W. Cotton St. | [Click here for map](#) [1]

Q. What is the function of Public Safety Communications?

A. Public Safety Communications serves as the coordinating agency for 9-1-1 emergency services throughout the City of Longview and as the dispatching service provider for the Police and Fire Departments. Public Safety Communications was created in 1992 by combining the Police and Fire/EMS dispatch centers. Other functions include implementing Wireless 9-1-1, notifying citizens of severe weather conditions, public education, and support services for other city departments.

Q. When should I call 9-1-1?

A. 9-1-1 should be used in the event of a police, fire, or medical emergency in which emergency personnel need to respond. 9-1-1 should not be used to report utility outages, traffic jams, seek information about traffic tickets, get directions, talk to a detective, or ask for information about someone in jail. If in doubt as to whether or not the situation is an emergency, it is best to call 9-1-1.

Q. Why do the dispatchers ask so many questions? Why don't they just send help?

A. The 9-1-1 Operator is not delaying help by asking questions. Because Public Safety Communications uses a computer aided dispatch system, the information is immediately entered into the computer, which then forwards that information to the dispatcher. The dispatcher is relaying the information to the responding personnel while the 9-1-1 Operator is asking the questions. It is for the safety of the victim/patient and the responders that these questions are asked.

Q. If my address and phone number show up when I call 9-1-1, why does the 9-1-1 operator ask me what my address and phone number are?

A. Although the address and phone number from a landline phone display on the 9-1-1 operator's screen, there are several reasons why the information may not be correct. For example, if there has been a recent move from one location to another, and the phone number stayed the same, the wrong address may display. The 9-1-1 Operator will always verify the address to ensure that emergency personnel respond to the correct location in order to avoid any further harm or injury to the patient/victim.

Q. What should I do if my child or I dial 9-1-1 by mistake?

A. When 9-1-1 is dialed by mistake, the caller should always stay on the line. There is no penalty for calling 9-1-1 by mistake. The 9-1-1 Operator who answers the phone will want to verify the address and phone number, and make sure there is no emergency. If 9-1-1 is dialed by mistake and the caller hangs up, the 9-1-1 Operator will immediately call the location to confirm that there is no emergency. A police officer is dispatched immediately, regardless of whether or not there is an emergency.

Q. What if the caller is hearing impaired or doesn't speak English?

A. Public Safety Communications has TDD/TTY capabilities at each call-taker station and is ready for calls from deaf or hearing or speech-impaired callers using a TTY. After you have dialed 9-1-1, press a few keys on your TTY. Calls from non-English speaking callers are conferenced with AT&T's Language Line translation service to improve communication.

Q. My electricity/cable/phone is not working; can 9-1-1 help me get it working?

A. Many of these services are disabled during severe storms. During these times, the communications

center is extremely busy with emergency calls. We can neither control the speed of the utility companies nor provide estimates on the time the utilities will be working again. If you have an outage, you should contact the following:

- Electricity - AEP/SWEPCO 1-888-218-2919 (English) or 1-888-218-3924 (Spanish)
- Gas - Reliant/Entex 903-759-7133 or Atmos Energy (formerly TXU) 1-800-817-8090
- Water or Sewer emergencies - City of Longview 903-236-3030

Q. I called for assistance, why is it taking so long for assistance to get to me?

A. Telecommunicators prioritize all the calls that come into the communications center and dispatch assistance as soon as possible; however, many circumstances may slow the response to your particular call. Higher priority calls may have to be handled before an officer is dispatched to your location. High call volume may create a backlog of non-emergency calls. Generally, calls are prioritized from life threatening, in-progress or just-occurred and an officer's immediate presence will affect the outcome, an officer's immediate presence is desired, and an officer's immediate presence will not affect the outcome.

Q. Why prioritize calls?

A. We average 290 calls for service each day - from barking dogs to murder. We must respond more quickly when a life is in danger than when only property is threatened or someone is inconvenienced. We have limited resources and at times must handle numerous calls simultaneously. By prioritizing calls, we are able to effectively and efficiently use those resources. We make every effort to provide the highest level of service on every call.

Q. I called 9-1-1 and the telecommunicator was very professional and provided me with a high level of service. How can I commend the telecommunicator?

A. A simple "thank you" means a lot coming from someone whose life we have touched. To assess our level of service to the community, the Communications Manager encourages citizen input.

For more information call: 903-237-1170 | [Contact Us](#) [2]

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- [1] http://www.google.com/maps?f=q&source=s_q&hl=en&geocode=&q=302+W.+Cotton+St..++longview,+tx&sll=32.496289,-94.809372&sspn=0.008397,0.01929&ie=UTF8&hq=&hnear=302+W+Cotton+St,+Longview,+Gregg,+Texas+75601&z=16
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